

Kentucky's Forests



Public Forests

Logging Trends on Public Forestlands in Kentucky

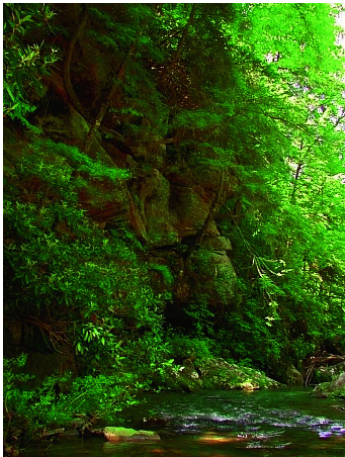
Public forestlands make up about 896,622 acres or 2 percent of Kentucky's land base, according to 1988 U.S. Forest Service data. These public forests support a wealth of biological diversity and contribute significantly to the state's \$8.7 billion tourism industry.¹

The Daniel Boone National Forest (DBNF) is the largest block of publicly owned lands in Kentucky, covering 702,000 acres within 21 eastern Kentucky counties, up 6,600 acres since 2000. The Land Between the Lakes National Recreation Area (LBL) encompasses 170,000 acres in western Kentucky and Tennessee. Other public forests include the Mammoth Cave National Park, five state forests (36,000 acres), 40 state nature preserves, 33 wildlife management areas and the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area.

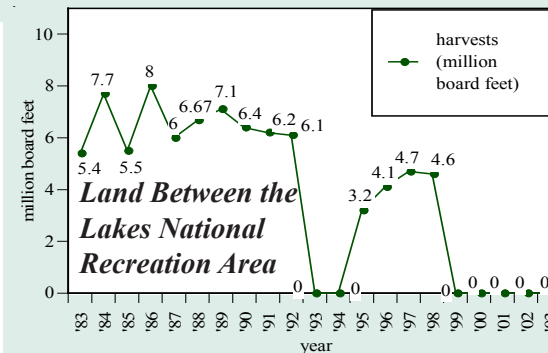
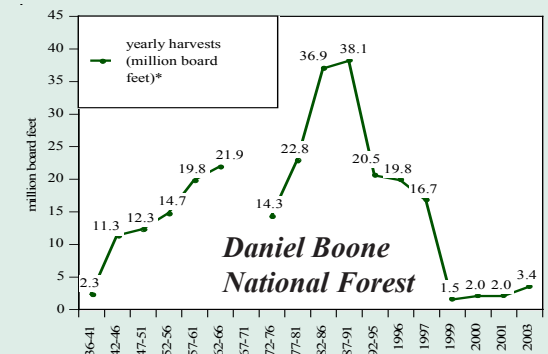
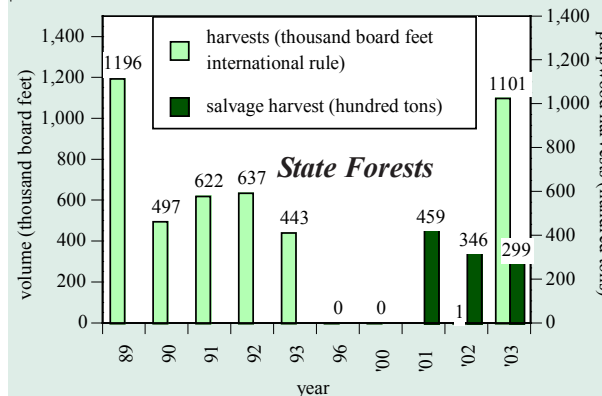
Timber harvests on the five state forests were suspended in 1996 to conduct inventories and prepare forest management plans. In 2001 through 2003, the state authorized a salvage harvest of 110,462 tons of pulpwood and sawtimber from the Pennyriple State Forest after it was impacted by the southern pine beetle. The Division of Forestry also authorized the sale of 686,783 board feet of white pine from Kentucky Ridge State Forest in 2002 and a minor sale of 850 board feet in 2003. In 2003, the Division also contracted for a harvest of 1.1 million board feet from Tygarts State Forest due to ice storm damage.

Timber sales on the DBNF reached an all-time high in 1989 at 45.1 million board feet and dropped to their lowest levels in 1999 when 1.5 million board feet were harvested from the forest due to a shift in emphasis on recreation and ecosystem management, as well as lawsuits and appeals challenging timber sales. Harvests increased in 2000 and 2001 to 2 million board feet. The Forest Service released its final revised long-range forest management plan for DBNF in April 2004. The plan identifies 347,800 acres as suitable for timber production and specified the maximum allowable timber harvests at 21.9 million cubic feet for the first 10 years (average yearly harvests of 13.14 million board feet).¹

The U.S Forest Service assumed management of the LBL in 1999 from the Tennessee Valley Authority. The Forest Service released a draft long-range management plan for LBL in March 2004. The preferred action includes the harvest of an average 3.89 million board feet of timber yearly.²



Measure 14. Logging Trends on Public Forestland in Kentucky^{endnote}



*Based on 4-year averages 1936-1995. 1936-61 are actual average harvest volumes for those years depicted, 1976-93 data represents averages for volume sold under contract, which may not necessarily have been the amount harvested that year. Data not available for 1967-71. 1996 through 2001 actual harvests contracted.